



RASH

CITY

Well, we were going to have a nice picture of Miss Kinski and a pillow on the front cover, but then we thought, hell, this is just a freebie prototype, so we're going to save it for a later issue. This is known as an 'encouragement to subscribe'. Of course it might not be much of an encouragement, depending on your sex, sexual preference and moral outlook - it is a nice picture, but then as I'm something of a fan of hers, I might be biased... The alternative was to have some sort of picture related to what you'll find inside, but how do you link splatter movies, two headed women, censorship, lists, self-defence and Miss Kinski? So we decided not to have anything on the cover except for a few words - as you will find a lot more of these inside, it'd be handy if you get used to them now. Oh, while we're here, the small print : some articles in this 'zine may not be suitable for children or anyone of a nervous disposition (though you'll get worse in the course of an average Saturday night's TV). Enjoy...

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'Trash City' is a 'zine devoted to life, liberty, pursuit of happiness, exploitation in entertainment, beauty, death, splatter movies, computer games, Inter-rail holidays, UFO's, general weirdness and anything else the editors see fit to print. The style is best described as 'conversational' and 'informal' - the emphasis is very much on the words, since our method of production makes photos, etc almost completely impossible...

It is only available from me, but is basically FREE, at least if things stay as they are at the moment ; you only pay the postage (if you bought this from a shop, you'll have had to pay for it - understandably, shop-keepers aren't keen to stock things there's no profit in!). If you want to receive any future issues, the best thing is to send us a few quid in cheques/p.o./cash (made payable to Jim McLennan where appropriate) along with your name and address - we'll then send you them until your money runs out. We will probably have to start charging for it some time (not more than about 30p/issue), that'll come off your sub as well.

SPECIAL OFFER - first few people to subscribe will receive a video tape. This will be of some god-awful film and quite possibly of dire quality; we can not accept any responsibility for your sanity. Just say 'I want my video' and 'I am over 18' when you apply and you stand a chance - the cost of the p&p will be taken off your subscription!

Articles, artwork, etc are also extremely welcome - see elsewhere for more about this.

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The views expressed in this 'zine are not necessarily those of the editor or publisher, and may well be an attempt to wind you up.

A Sort of Editorial

"Journey into the kaleidoscope of technology. Da Vinci is on the monitor. Dive into Supernovas. Nebulous and mysterious. Chrome fires with laser beams. Fireworks in a rainbow of colours. True and blue, but bred red! Across galaxies of space and eons of eternity - we're sure getting cooler all the time!"

Welcome to Trash City. On behalf of the citizens of the urban sector, I'd like to show you around. Our itinerary is not for the faint of heart or the weak of soul - hang onto your heads, your stomachs, and any other parts of your body that you wish to...

Right, enough of the pseudo-intellectual hogwash. Hello. Unaccustomed as I am to writing for public consumption, it is up to me to write this damn bit to introduce you to the 'zine, but not having done this sort of thing before, I'm at a loss for what to say, and have to resort to the two hunks of garbage above. What ARE you supposed to say to people you don't really know, but who have handed out hard earned money for your ramblings? Aren't you supposed to say something that will make them think it's been all worthwhile? That's the conventional way...

This is NOT a conventional 'zine though. Inside you will find a lot of text, on a wide variety of subjects, some pictures, a few press clippings, and so on. The one thing that links them all is that I find them at least slightly interesting. Why am I inflicting them on you? Boredom mostly! I am currently tied down in a very boring job (in a stockbrokers - Yawn!) and I needed something to keep me amused. Since starting work, I could feel my individuality slowly ebbing away - this is my fight-back...

However, it's not JUST me. It's helped a few of my workmates avoid being mutated into yuppies, and I'd like to inoculate a few more people, so if YOU don't care about Porsches, Filofaxes, CD players and would rather read the Weekly World News than the Times (if you've not heard of the former, don't worry - you soon will have!), this is for you. Free your mind and your ass will follow!! Get in touch - write me a letter, an article, a story! You'll be doing me a favour and yourself too [Pretentious, moi?].

[Hey, nearly 2/3rds of the way down the page - isn't this editing lark easy?] A quick plea. We need contributions for next issue, or you'll end up getting more of the same. There's more about this later on, but I'd especially like a few contributions from the fairer sex - you may notice as we go on a certain 'masculine' bias in the articles. This is for no better reason than it is a bit difficult to produce anything else with an all-male editorial team!

A few thanks. Steve, Per, everyone at work (even the stockbrokers!), my parents, Doug (subscriber #1), the Holmes Bros, the Scala Cinema, the Virgin Megastore, God (for supporting Arsenal) and anyone else who helped.

Ho hum, ten lines to go. Time for some more of the pseudo-intellectual hogwash I think. See you on the other side for Aphrodite incarnate.
Jim McLennan, the Head Ed.

"All aboard! The journey to Trash City - the start of the third millenium - is about to begin! The countdown is on. The time-bombs are ticking away. Our quartz movements ignite. We'll soon be going up and down & back and forth in the raddest scenes. Past the pulse beat of new life and new trends, avant-garde, Old Wave, No Wave in a fireworks display of desire"

NASTASSJA KINSKI, SEX GODDESS, PART 1

Ok, she may not be the greatest actress in the universe (though she's certainly not the worst either) and she does have an unhappy knack of acting in films that get savaged by the critics and/or the paying audience but has there ever been a more gorgeous, attractive creature seen on the silver screen? [N.B. This is a rhetorical question...]

Aside from her beauty, even though she'll never win any Oscars, it has to be admitted that she has the guts to take on a far wider range of roles than Meryl Streep has ever attempted. While Ms. Streep plays pretty much the same persona in all her films, however effectively, Ms. Kinski has played a were-panther, an American revolutionary, a schoolgirl prostitute, a Dorset farm girl from the turn of the century and a yuppie stock-broker (not that there are any like her where I'm working), with an effectiveness ranging from acceptable to excellent.

This article will be slightly different from the usual film/biography. As well as the usual historical details, list of films, etc, you'll also find information on how much Nastassja Kinski appears in the film, and how much of her is seen (these two are NOT the same if you think about it!) - the phrase "starring Nastassja Kinski" covers a multitude of sins.

Let's start at the very beginning (a very good place to start, as Julie Andrews remarked, but since Julie Andrews is not really a trash actress perhaps it's not the best of quotes - however, since most trash actresses are unable to speak and take their clothes off simultaneously, and are therefore a poor source of quotes, it'll have to do. I digress.) with her birthday. Isn't research a wonderful thing? Having looked up several film reference books, I can confidently state that when it comes to her date of birth, I haven't a clue. Some books say she was born in 1959, while others disagree, giving dates as late as the 29th of January 1961. Frankly, who cares? It's not that important, except that the thought of a 15-year old appearing nude in a film is usually thought of as rather more 'depraved' than if she is 17!

Daughter of Brigitte and Klaus Kinski, her teenage years seems to have been real 'wild-child' ones, parties, staying out all night and doing all the usual things teenagers do, with the interesting addition of posing for some 'artistic' photographs.

Again, my research turned up different stories about where/by whom she was discovered (don't why I didn't just plagiarise things like normal!). One tale has it that the director Wim Wenders (with whom she was to work again later on "Paris, Texas") saw her at a rock concert, while another says that it was Wenders' wife who found her, dancing in a disco.

Whatever the story, the net result was :

FALSCHER BEWEGUNG (Wrong Movement) - Wim Wenders, 1974

Wilhelm leaves his mother and his native village in North Germany to try and become a writer. On his journey, he meets an old Nazi, with a mute teenager (NK). In Cologne, he falls in love with Therese, an actress, and meets Bernard, an Austrian poet. These five people arrive, by chance, at the mansion of a rich industrialist on the point of suicide.

I can't really say very much about this film because I haven't seen it, the above synopsis being translated from a French book. I don't think it's currently available in this country, but I'd be very interested if anyone out there DOES have a copy !

ART : ????? ENTERTAINMENT : ????? KINSKI CONTENT : ????? FLESH : ?????

Her next film couldn't have been much more different, as she appeared in the last Hammer Horror film ever made :

TO THE DEVIL A DAUGHTER - Peter Sykes, 1975

NK plays a young girl 'sold' at birth by her father to a coven of demon worshippers in exchange for material success - their intentions being to use her as an evil version of the Virgin Mary in order to bring their 'Lord', Astaroth, into the world. However, her father tries to get out of his side of the deal and leaves his daughter in the care of an expert in the occult. Unfortunately, the coven has a telepathic link with her...

A fairly effective adaptation of the book by Dennis Wheatley, even if the hand of the censor meant that it was a little less intelligible than it was supposed to be. All the acting is competent at worst and Nastassja gives a nice performance, with just enough hidden menace to be convincing.

NK isn't the star here - her name is in much smaller letters than the two established actors, Christopher Lee and Richard Widmark, and is even behind Honor (Kinky Boots) Blackman. She is on the screen for a good chunk of the movie. Even so - certainly more than Blackman (whom she kills with a knitting needle to the brain) or Lee. In terms of flesh, there is a VERY brief nude scene at the end, a gift to those who own video-recorders...

ART : * ENTERTAINMENT : *** KINSKI CONTENT : **** FLESH : ****

Her next activity was a slight change of tack, as Nastassja returned to try her hand at TV, for an episode of a German police series :

TATORT, episode REIFEZEUGNIS (For Your Love Only) - Wolfgang Petersen, 1976.

NK is a schoolgirl who is having an affair with her teacher. Another pupil finds out about this, and tries to blackmail her into having sex with him. Meanwhile, another pupil is blackmailing the teacher. Oh, and the wife of the teacher knows as well (it seems to have been a pretty badly concealed affair). Then the guy blackmailing NK tries to rape her, and is killed by a friend of NK - this is where the police come in.

A well-made, solid piece of drama, which won several awards, including some for NK. In terms of UK series, it'd be more "Juliet Bravo" than "The Professionals", with the police not playing much of a part, especially in the first half. This was released in the cinemas here, and was available on videotape for a while too (Guild Video).

Nastassja Kinski is one of the main stars, and is on screen for quite a lot of the film, probably more than anyone else, with the exception of the teacher, so it's good value for money. Compared with the film that had gone immediately before, and the next one she was to do, it is remarkably restrained in terms of nudity, with just a topless scene or two.

ART : *** ENTERTAINMENT : **** KINSKI CONTENT : **** FLESH : ***

It was now that she met up with Roman Polanski. who was to turn her from a moderately well-known actress into an international superstar, doubtlessly while bonking her brains out, given his predilection for the younger woman (which has made him persona non grata in the States). Before putting her in "Tess", it was decided that a little more acting experience wouldn't be amiss. The product of this training was :

HOTEL DER LEIDENSCHAFTLICHEN BLUMCHEN (Passion Flower Hotel, aka Virgin Campus, aka Boarding School, and that's just the English titles) - Andre Farwagi, 1977

A new girl (NK) arrives at a boarding-school on the shores of a lake. Along with the other girls in the dormitory, she sets up a brothel so that they can lose their virginity - most of the film is about the severe trouble they have doing so!

I don't want to say too much about this film here, as a full article on it can be found later on in this issue, but I have to say this is her finest moment. The plot is totally ridiculous, but who cares? One thing to note is that the guy who plays Frank in "Hellbound : Hellraiser 2", made his acting debut in this.

The whole film is just an excuse to show pretty girls in a state of undress. Of course, it's all done with such a sense of humour that it's nearly impossible to find inoffensive, but the sex scene at the end remains unsurpassed in the NK chronology, with the possible exception of "Cat People".

ART : NONE! ENTERTAINMENT : ***** KINSKI CONTENT : *** FLESH : *****

The shooting of "Tess" was delayed somewhat, due to a slight problem that Roman Polanski was having with the authorities in California, to be more specific, that he was guilty of "Furnishing a controlled substance to a minor; committing a lewd or lascivious act; having unlawful sexual intercourse; perversion, sodomy and rape by use of drugs" [Question : Who described Roman Polanski as "an evil, profligate dwarf"? Answer : Roman Polanski]. To fill in time, some more acting experience was acquired :

COSI COME SEI (Stay the Way You are, Just Stay as You are) - Alberto Lattuada, 1977

Giulo Merengo is in Florence to negotiate the purchase of a statue. He gets to know Francesca, a young botany student. he also meets an old friend of his, who tells him that Francesca is the daughter of Fosca, an old flame of Giulo's, with whom he had an affair some twenty years ago. This is pretty close to the age of Franceca...

Again, this is one that I haven't been able to lay my hands on. NK plays both Francesca and Fosca - judging by the stills that I've seen from it, she looks absolutely gorgeous.

ART : ?????? ENTERTAINMENT : ?????? KINSKI CONTENT : ?????? FLESH : ??????

Finally, the shooting of the film that made her famous all over the world. as well as disproving the earlier mentioned rule about Oscar nominations leading to dull evenings, got underway:

TESS - Roman Polanski, 1977-78

NK is a Wessex farmer's daughter whose family are distantly related to the d'Urbevilles, a once great family. She is sent to the current owners of the title to ask for aid (even though they 'bought' the title), and is given a job. She is raped by the lord of the manor, and returns to her village - the child dies soon after birth, and Tess moves away to become a dairy-maid. There, she meets and falls in love with Angel, a clergyman's son : they get married, but he leaves her when she reveals her past. This is a big mistake, as he eventually realises, but by then she has married the lord who violated her. As in most of Hardy's novels, there is not a

happy ending - Tess is hung for the murder of her husband.

It would take a far worse director than Roman Polanski to make a bad film of possibly the greatest novel in the English language (though I'm sure Richard Attenborough would have a good chance of ruining it [Meow!]). It is a long film, but it would have been difficult to cut very much out without losing the atmosphere of the novel. NK gives a superb performance, possibly her best ever, and the entire film is a classic.

There is enough NK in this film to satisfy anyone, though she does keep her clothes on - even the rape scene is extremely decorous.

ART : ***** ENTERTAINMENT : **** KINSKI CONTENT : ***** FLESH : **

So what should she do next, out of all the offers of film scripts that came pouring in following 'Tess'? After over a year of deliberation, she chose a film by Francis Ford Coppola which sounded a pretty safe bet - his track record was impressive, even discounting 'Apocalypse Now'. However, this was the first real case of Nastassja's unerring nose for a turkey...

ONE FROM THE HEART - Francis Ford Coppola, 1981

Two lovers, Hank & Frannie, have an argument, and decide independently to go for a night on the town ('the town' being Las Vegas). They each meet up and have a brief fling with a stranger, Hank's lover being a circus girl called Leila (NK).

Really very little happens in this film - it is certainly a technically impressive achievement (you have to keep reminding yourself that it was entirely shot in a studio), but I kept thinking "What's the point?". Why bother constructing Las Vegas instead of using the real thing? There are a few pleasant musical interludes, including NK singing (or at least PRETENDING to sing), but it fails to do anything much to the emotions, beyond the usual vague feelings of lust for NK.

There's not even much of that either - she doesn't really appear in much of the film, although when she does she kicks the film out of it's self-satisfied rut and into the realms of dream-land; dancing on a high tension wire, balancing on a ball and being the only thing that keeps this film from being consigned to the box marked 'big, overblown, blunders'.

ART : ** ENTERTAINMENT : * KINSKI CONTENT : * FLESH : **

Seven films in, nine to go. It'd be nice to cover the next one too, and get us to exactly half-way, but as it's "Cat People", any attempt to do it justice in 15 lines would be futile, so we'll save it until next issue! So instead, here are a couple of random bits of interest on her, to keep you going till then...

*If you have trouble spelling 'Nastassja', you should be grateful - on her first film she wasn't billed as 'Kinski' but 'Nakszynski'!!

*She has a criminal record. On her return to Germany after filming 'Stay the Way You Are', she was arrested for failing to pay fines resulting from evading her fare on public transport. She was sentenced to 14 days, but with time off for good behaviour, only spent 5 days in jail. Anyone for a remake of "Reform School Girls"?

A SMALL ENCYCLOPEDIA OF TRASH
(A street-plan for Trash City)

It's impossible to say what it is about trash that appeals to me, but I'd still like to have a go. Trash is not even really definable, it's more of a feeling than a physical thing; the churning in your stomach when the music in a horror film changes to 'Here comes a gory bit!', the guilty pleasure you feel when you read a book that you know will never win the Booker Prize, the itching in your groin when your favourite actress appears and you KNOW she's gonna take her clothes off SOMETIME in this movie - all this, and more is the nature of Trash. To help the beginner to recognise it, here are some simple guidelines that you may care to bear in mind when you are looking for a bit of low-life.

- 1) Trash is where you find it. One man's trash is another man's garbage. The rules are, there are no rules. And other such cliches, all of which mean that it's all up to YOU - don't expect me to give you a nice box marked 'Trash'! Some people wouldn't consider Nastassja Kinski a trash actress. To each their own...
- 2) Trash is fun. The one thing that links all aspects of trash together is that their main goal is to entertain. Of course, it may well be a rather strange definition of 'entertainment', covering death by chainsaw as well as more normal areas like excitement, adventure, and romance. If it ain't fun, it ain't trash.
- 3) Trash is cheap. The odds of something being trash are roughly in proportion to how little money is spent on it. High-budget trash is possible (the James Bond films are a good example), but people will tend to expect more of a thing that's noticeably had money put into it.
- 4) Trash is popular. It appeals to the lowest common denominator, to peoples' baser instincts, to the Neanderthal in all of us. Trash can't hope to survive on 'artistic merit' alone - it has to rely on sales. Trash can not, however, be too popular or it gets sucked into the mainstream inhabited by "Terry & June" and nothing deserves THAT fate.
- 5) Trash is escapist. Trash is not concerned with the problems of life, such as earning a living, buying a home or having 2.3 kids. It's a chance to escape from the humdrum routine to a world inhabited by fantasy creatures - a strange mix of handsome secret agents, beautiful nymphomaniac school-girls, demons from hell and aliens from Mars. Quite a Nice Place really!
- 6) Trash is 'decadent'. Probably due to its escapist nature, there does seem to be quite a lot of sex in trash. Of course, sex is also pretty cheap if you compare it with other ways of filling the screen, no costumes or props being necessary. Sex is still pretty popular, too.
- 7) Trash is in 'poor taste'. Hype and publicity are the life-blood of trash - there's nothing like a good-going controversy, or an MP saying "this book/film/song is the sickest thing I've ever read/seen/heard". Trash is very good at galloping rough-shod over peoples' sensibilities, and breaking taboos, if for no other reason than it makes good commercial sense.
- 8) Trash is not to be taken seriously. Always remember that the purpose is to entertain; if you go to see "The Rocky Horror Show" expecting to see some sophisticated wit and political satire, you may well end up being disappointed.

9) Trash is unpretentious. Not only should it not be taken seriously, it should never give the impression that it should be. Trash just presents itself and says "Here I am, enjoy me", with no great statements about how artistic it is.

10) It'd be nice to have another one, to give us a "Ten Commandments of Trash" but I'm afraid I can't think of a tenth one!

Time to quit talkin' and start chalkin', by getting down to some examples. Let's begin in the world of films, possibly the most fertile area for trash. Certain areas are almost Total Trash, with many horror movies being prime examples, serving up ninety minutes of gratuitous violence, special effects and occasionally nudity too, to take the audience on a flight into the dark realms of their minds (provide your own sick bags). "When in doubt, gross 'em out" seems to be the motto of many of the directors, some of whom have gone on to achieve fame, at least in certain circles (Stuart Gordon, Sam Raimi) and a few are now recognised as masters in their own right (Jacques Tourneur, Terence Fisher). The same is true of their creations - everyone knows Christopher Lee as Dracula, and Freddie Krueger is rapidly becoming as much a part of America as Mom & apple pie. Some actors and actresses do very little else but Trash films, Linnea Quigley probably being the leading lady; she even played a character called Trash.

The sexploitation film, where the plot is little more than an excuse to see pretty girls with minimal clothing, is less popular than it was, no doubt partly due to AIDS. Films like the Lemon Popsicle series and Porky's, aimed at those not quite old enough to get in to see them, but always seemed to promise more than they actually delivered! Films like "9 1/2 Weeks" still attract an audience ; they will no doubt be made for as long as there are people willing to go and see them.

As a general rule, avoid any film that gets an Oscar nomination (unless it's for special effects) - this means they have been taken SERIOUSLY, and you're likely to be in for a dull evening.

There are a huge number of trash books published each year - if anything, they are even more popular than trash films. Romances, westerns, spy books, Science Fiction & Horror are all gold-mines of Trash ; since I'd guess that over 75% of books read in this country are purely for pleasure, the success of trash becomes quite understandable. As in all areas, a variety of trash to suit all tastes is on offer, ranging from the soft (ish)-porn of Jackie Collins to the splatter of Shaun Hutson, via the literate trash of Fredrick Forsyth.

As ever though, the establishment refuses to recognise any popular authors the odds of Robert Heinlein getting the Nobel prize for literature are not a lot worse now he's dead than they were when he was alive.

Rather than go on listing trash, it'll be quicker to give the areas that are trash desert, normally because people take them a bit too seriously. Politics and religion are almost trash-free, probably because they are so dull - however, occasionally a politician will slip a little bit beyond the limits of good taste. Ilona Staller, the Italian porn star turned MP, has made herself an international reputation out of this sort of thing - if you saw her appearance on "The Last Resort", you'll know what I mean. Another example, not so much of slipping beyond the limits as leaping over them with the agility of a startled gazelle, was the recent speech by the Speaker of the German Parliament. He said Hitler's early years were "a triumphal procession" and "glorious" for many Germans, as well as that

Hitler had restored German pride and that many Germans had thought the Jews deserved to be put in their place. It was supposed to be in inverted commas but such bad taste could not go unpunished and, not surprisingly, he had to resign...

As a handy, cut-out-and-keep guide, here's a table giving some examples of trash and non-trash, in a variety of categories. The non-trash fails to qualify either because it's too "good" to be trash, or because it is too "bad" to be trash; the technical term for the latter is "garbage".

Category	Trash	non-Trash
TV Sitcoms	'Allo, 'Allo	Hi-de-Hi
Cop Series, American	The Equalizer	Hill Street Blues
Cop Series, British	Dempsey & Makepeace	The Bill
Soap Opera, American	Dynasty	Dallas
Soap Opera, British	Crossroads (RIP)	Coronation Street
Singers, Female	Tiffany	Kylie Minogue
Singers, Male	Prince	Michael Jackson
Groups	Transvision Vamp	Dire Straits
Actors	Rutger Hauer	Jack Nicholson
Actresses	Pia Zadora	Meryl Streep
Directors	John Carpenter	Richard Attenborough
Painters	Salvador Dali	Pablo Picasso
Holiday resorts	Amsterdam	Paris

This is a fun party game, that can provoke hours of argument over who is, and who is not, trash - I'm sure you may well disagree with some of the names above. The border between trash/non-trash can be a very thin one - what makes Tiffany trash, but not Kylie? Perhaps it's the former's quite endearingly original habit of singing in shopping malls, or maybe I'm just a sucker for a seventeen year old...

This is the trash universe. Have fun.

Ten Possible Titles for that Film you Never Made.

- 1) Bloodthirsty Droolythings
- 2) Night of the Nympho Nymphettes
- 3) Zombie Dinner Party
- 4) Invasion of the Icky Monsters
- 5) The Texas 'My Little Pony' Massacre
- 6) Slaughterhouse Schoolgirls
- 7) Schoolgirl Slaughterhouse
- 8) Anything with the word 'Chainsaw' in it
- 9) It came from Beneath the Duvet
- 10) Wild Sorority Girls of Planet Playtex
(with thanks to Bloom County!)

Italian TV

I was talking to our Italian correspondent (OK, a girl I used to know who is now working over near Florence as a student teacher) about Italian TV - in the current debate over de-regulation, it's often held up as a warning about what might happen here. However, she told me that among the films she's seen on TV over there are "The Fly", "Hellraiser" and "Dawn of teh Dead", all uncut and on at about 8 p.m. Don't know about you, but I'd be quite willing to suffer quite a few hours of soap operas and games shows if we got a few films like THOSE on!

success, if only so that Clive Barker can be asked to return for "Hell on Earth - Hellraiser III" and we can see what his dark imagination can produce when given the opportunity and the budget. Mind you, I wasn't THAT impressed with "Hellraiser" the first time I saw it, so I'm more than willing to suspend judgement for a little while!

A few other films to look out for in the coming months

The Lady in White (Frank la Loggia). A traditional ghost story, set in the 1960's (tho' it's difficult to tell) about a boy who just escapes death at the hands of a notorious local murderer, and then starts seeing the ghost of one of the murderer's earlier victims. For the most part, this is a lovely film, with some nice performances (the boy is played by Lukas Haas, who was in 'Witness') and a few pieces of humour thrown in too. Unfortunately, the special effects are laughably inept, especially the flying scenes, which distract severely from the generally pleasing nature of the film.

Paperhouse (Bernard Rose). British horror film-makers seem to be very interested in the relationship between dreams and reality - this is another example, but it deserves praise for trying a slightly different approach, even though it is not 100% successful. The story concerns a young girl, suffering from a glandular fever type illness, who discovers that her hallucinations are affected, and can be controlled, by a sketch she is drawing. For a while this is great fun - then the visions start to take on a life of her own, and suddenly it isn't quite as nice anymore. For the first hour, this is an excellent film, far sharper than the muddled and confused 'Dream Demon', and almost up to the level of the great and god-like 'Hellraiser'. The dream sequences are handled with a lot of style and imagination - the scenes where she is being chased by her dream father are especially impressive. Unfortunately, the pace in the last third slackens severely, and the ending is not brilliant. Nonetheless this remains an impressive film, and it is good to see the British horror film is still alive and well.

Jack's Back (Sorry, director unknown). Someone is commemorating the 100th anniversary of Jack the Ripper by killing prostitutes on the same days he did. A doctor sees one of his colleagues in circumstances best described as rather suspicious, but before he can report this to the cops, he is murdered. Now, this doctor had a twin brother, who dreamt the whole thing, and he goes to the police - having given them all the fine details of what happened, they do the obvious thing and suspect him. He has to prove that he didn't do it by catching the real killer. I didn't find this American thriller especially effective because even I could spot the red-herrings with my negligible detective skill. The plot is reasonable, the acting is nothing special and the direction is pedestrian. In fact, there is very little to mark this out from any one of a hundred similar films. It is entertaining enough, but failed to excite anything more than mild interest in me. Perhaps I've overdosed on Jack the Ripper films lately. Avoid, and watch 'Hands of the Ripper' instead.

The Dinner Party Game - 12 people (six men, six women) for dinner.

Men	Women
Christopher Lee	Elizabeth Bathory (Countess Dracula)
Salvador Dali	Lady Jane Grey
Sir John Millais (painter)	Nastassja Kinski
Tony Benn	Ilona Staller (Italian MP)
Phil Oakey (Human League)	Germaine Greer
Myself!	Kate Bush

Think it would be an interesting evening. Any alternative suggestions?

THE AMAZING HERSCHELL GORDON LEWIS

Whenever the history of horror/splatter movies comes under discussion, the name of Herschell Gordon Lewis is certain to come up, as one of the early exponents of gore, and a founding father of the video nasty. His films are hardly ever seen nowadays, however, which made the recent showing of four of his epics, at the Scala Cinema here in London, all the more welcome. For the benefit of those who haven't had the good fortune [?] to see any of his movies we present the following descriptions :

SCUM OF THE EARTH (1961) - H.G.Lewis started work in the field of sex rather than violence, trying to sneak as much as he could past the censors all-seeing eye. This is an example of the 'nudie cutie', where the plot is nothing more than an excuse to see pretty girls with few clothes on. It all seems terribly harmless now, with nothing that would be out of place in an average evening's TV viewing - I think there is one nipple, and if you blink you miss it. No doubt in it's day it was considered pretty hot stuff.

The plot, such as it is, concerns a girl who starts modelling to earn enough money to go to college - at first the assignments are totally harmless, but they gradually become 'swimwear adverts' and before she knows where she is, they have become bad enough for her to be black-mailed by the photographers into doing 'just one more photo session'. In the end the photographer realises how evil he is being and kills the thug who is terrorising the girl - the 'Mr Big' commits suicide when faced with capture by the police.

According to the voice-over at the end of the film, the 'Scum of the Earth' in the title are those who prey upon young girls to get them to take part in such things. This seems a bit hypocritical, given the large number of camera shots in the film which languidly cruise up an actress from head to toe, or occasionally toe to head. The acting itself is fairly dire - well down to the usual standard...

2000 MANIACS (1964) - eventually the censor got wise and started to crack down on nudity in films, but this didn't bother Herschell; he just switched to violence and went right on making movies. His first such film, "Blood Feast", is still on the banned list today, thanks to (among other things) a tongue being ripped out - "2000 Maniacs" was the follow up. As far as I know, it's the only one of his films still commercially available in this country, albeit in a heavily cut version.

In the Civil War, the Southern town of Pleasant Valley was attacked by a group of renegade Union soldiers, who slaughtered many of the inhabitants. Now, 100 years later, the town is out for revenge, and hi-jack two groups of Yankees, by pretending it is a nicer celebration. One is dismembered with an axe and barbecued, one is torn apart by horses, one is rolled down a hill in a spiked barrel and one is crushed under a boulder. The other two escape only to find out that the town ceased to exist a long time ago.

This is a gory film, again for the time. The effects are not bad, and there is a certain nasty air about the whole thing that is disturbing. Most of the actors playing the 'maniacs' are suitably O.T.T. and the entire film is pretty surreal, with some truly weird dialogue. However, there are only four gore-scenes in it, which isn't enough if you are used to the semi-continuous splatter we get now. No matter. It remains a charming period piece, although it isn't frightening at all, and the hyper acting will keep you interested between the bloody bits. Be warned that very little of the gore is visible on the video version, with the axe

murder and the 'horse race' being particularly heavily butchered.

SOMETHING WEIRD (1967) - Eventually, Lewis moved away from pure gore, though he still returned to it occasionally (see below). This is one of his excursions into non-sex 'n' violence film-making.

A man is nearly killed by an electric shock - when he recovers he gets some good news and some bad news. The good news is that he now has second sight and can foretell the future. The bad news is that he is horribly scarred, so he turns to making a living as a masked fortune teller. One day an old hag arrives and promises to cure his scarring if he will become her lover. He agrees - it turns out she is capable of looking quite pleasant if she wants to. The police then invite him in to use his psychic powers to help them solve a murder which has baffled them.

This is a DULL film. There is very little in it of interest to anyone, especially if they are looking for trash. It is just too BAD to qualify. The acting is dire, without the ham quality that made "2000 Maniacs" a far more memorable film, with the honourable exception of the hag (played by some actress whose name I forget, and can't be bothered to look up, because as far as I know, she has never appeared in any other film) who deserves some sort of award for the worst impersonation of an old woman I think I have ever seen. There is no drama, tension or excitement in it whatsoever. It was recently back at the Scala on a double bill with "The Gruesome Twosome" (coming soon, patience my pretties), but I left before it came on, even though I'd already paid my three quid. Avoid.

The Gruesome Twosome (1967) - Ah, this is MUCH better. This is what they want! Made the same year as "Something Weird", but while that was just a bad film, this one is sooo bad it becomes entertaining.

A little old lady, Mrs Pringle, and her mentally deficient son run a wig shop, which specializes in '100% real hair wigs'. They also rent out rooms to female students. Especially ones with long hair. The film revolves around the gore set-pieces, three girls being slaughtered and the son having an eye gouged out, with the rest of the story being the attempt of a student to find her room-mate, who vanished after going to rent a room from Mrs Pringle.

It initially came in at well under feature length, so extra scenes had to be bolted on to bring it up to the mark - half the fun is in trying to spot these scenes. There is a prologue involving two talking polystyrene heads, a beach party, and scenes at a stock-car meet and a drive-in which add absolutely nothing to the plot. There is one long section where the heroine is following a suspect, in which her attempts to conceal herself turn what was presumably supposed to be a masterpiece of tension into a classic of comedy. Over-acting honours this time go to Gretchen Wells as Mrs. Pringle who acts the complete psycho, down to talking to a stuffed wildcat. Another wonderful moment is where she gives her son, Rodney, a lovely present of an electric carving knife...

The blood is copious. One killing is especially noteworthy - Rodney spends what seems like hours with his hands in a dismembered body, rooting about for some liver (for the stuffed wild-cat!). It just never seems to end. Overall, this is comfortably the best film of Lewis's that I've seen, with the acting, plot and effects combining to produce a classic of it's type that deserves at least as big a place in movie history as his earlier ones. Movie trivia - the house inhabited by the wig-makers is on Elm Street. Has Wes Craven seen this film?

HOW TO DEFEND YOURSELF AGAINST A MAN ARMED WITH A PEKINESE

In these violent times, it is important for each citizen to be prepared for an encounter with some psycho thug wielding a baseball bat. So, we at "Trash City" are pleased to present a few hints on how to turn everyday household objects as weapons, taken from "Black Medicine, Volume II - Weapons at Hand" by N.Mashiro Ph.D (Paladin Press).

"ALARM CLOCK - Any small appliance like an electric alarm clock can be swung by its power cord in imitation of a medieval mace-and-chain. Strike at the head and face, or let the cord wrap itself around the opponent's defending arm like a South American bola, then pull him off balance and follow through with a fist or foot attack."

"CAT - Have you ever had some inconsiderate person throw a frightened cat at your face? [Well, now you come to mention it, no.] Twenty needle-sharp claws all try to fasten themselves in your skin at once. Even the most battle-hardened warrior is put off his stride by this attack."

And just to show you we're not biased :

"DOG - A loyal dog can be a surprising help in a fight. Even if not attack trained, your quiet little shephard may bare her teeth and charge if someone strikes you... Of course, if you have a toy poodle, it might just be best to grab it by the hind legs and use it as a club."

Is this man serious? Here's one close to all film-fans hearts :

"CHAINSAW - A running chainsaw is a weapon no one can stand up to without a gun. Even the noise has an intimidating effect. A chainsaw isn't quite as effective when it is turned off, but in desperate hands it can still inflct some very ugly wounds. The chainsaw is the modern broad-sword."

Now, should you be stuck down an alley :

"GARBAGE CAN LID - A garbage can lid is the frisbee of street combat. Obviously useful as a shield, a garbage can lid can also be held by the edge for battering, or thrown like a frisbee into a pursuer's shins."

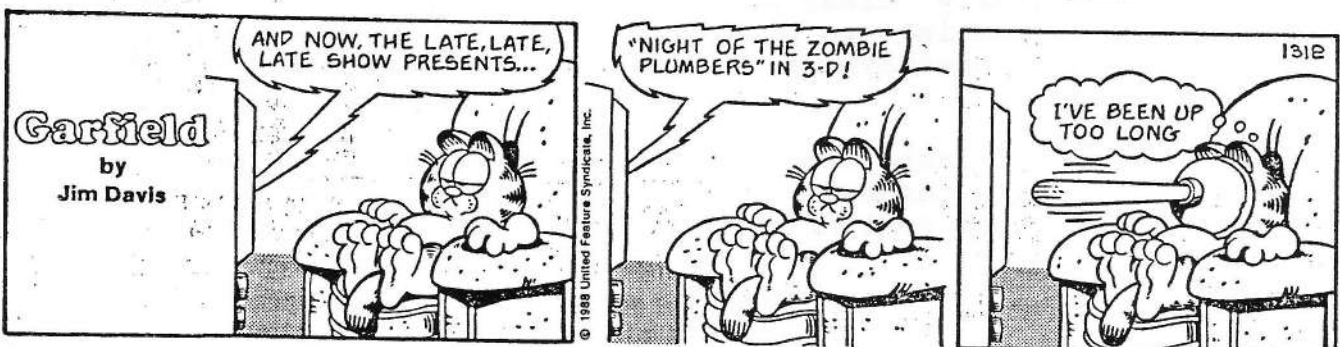
There is some humour in the book. Here is an example :

"LETTER OPENER - Suppose you come home early and find your wife in the arm of another man? This handy item will help you open her male."

Ha,ha,ha. Witty, huh? Want some more?

"One of the more colorful episodes of my karate training occurred when an instructor became confused one day, and finished an explanation with this remarkable statement; "Then you finish him off by slamming your groin into his knee!" Poor advice."

Hysterical. ~~There was one weapon he forgot to mention though...~~



Trash Pop

The Human League - Greatest Hits (Virgin LP, Cassette, CD, Video, etc)

With the release of the inevitable 'Greatest Hits' compilation, now seems a good time to look back at the career of the Human League, possibly the best producers of pure pop ever, and certainly a lot better than the SAW produced synthdrivel which seems to have the charts in a vice-like grip. Some might doubt that the Human League are trash, but the evidence for the prosecution is damning :

- i) They got their name from a board-game.
- ii) The two girl singers were found in a disco (just like a certain German actress)
- iii) Phil Oakey doesn't have his ears pierced - he has his NIPPLES pierced (and there was always that unspoken question of whether Suzanne and Joanne did too...).
- iv) Their songs include a gin advert, a Gary Glitter cover and one inspired by Judge Dredd.

It's difficult to think of any better credentials for admission to the Trash Pop Hall of Fame.

The compilation album barely recognises that they had already released 2 L.P's before "Dare" - only "Being Boiled", which made it into the charts on the back of the other successes (for a while there were SEVEN songs of theirs in the top 200). Admittedly, it is their "Greatest Hits", but it seems a shame to ignore songs like "Empire State Human" and "WXJL Tonight", which are easily up to the standard of later songs. Perhaps they wanted to avoid paying royalties to Ian Craig Marsh & Martyn Ware, who left before "Dare" to form Heaven 17 - they eventually found success later though there was a while when they were getting more income from the 2% or so of Human League royalties they got for letting Phil Oakey use the name, than from their own projects.

However, Heaven 17 are not our concern here. The video has "Circus of Death", directed by Russell "Highlander" Mulcahy - a strange piece of work with ground-level shots following a cat about and none of the usual Human League trickery. More Joy Division, really. Then, joy of joys, we see the "real" League on Top of the Pops performing "Sound of the Crowd" - this was where I first saw them, and I remember being totally freaked by it! I was just turned 15, and here was this bloke with a weird hair-style and nipple-rings, accompanied by two over made-up girls and a bank of synths. I wouldn't say it transformed my life, but I think we can say it was a formative influence... Looking at it now, it still seems their finest hour even if Adrian Wright seems to do sod all!

"Love Action", I hadn't seen before, but is interesting if a little dated now. "Open Your Heart" is excellent, with just the band and a white background (plus a few bits of electronic jiggery-pokery) being a simple but effective accompaniment to a simple but effective song. Then we come to "Don't you Want Me", probably THE classic song of the decade, number one for what seemed like years, but was only five weeks. A video that would have won an Oscar had it been 30 times as long ; meaningful looks, a plot that was never totally clear and photography that was art without ever being pretentious combine to produce a land-mark in video. When you look at the promos made nowadays, a good few groups could do with taking some lessons from it.

However, it couldn't last. The cracks begin to show in the next two songs, as they start to take themselves seriously, and begin using real (shudder) instruments. In "(Keep Feeling) Fascination", they are still clearly having

a good time, but even this is destroyed by the time "The Lebanon" arrives, and we see them standing seriously in front of an audience, just like all those OTHER performance videos, singing a serious song about the oh so serious Middle East. Sob. The end of an era.

Since then, they have been a pale shadow of themselves, sliding slowly and effortlessly down the slope by producing anonymous soul music worthy on no attention whatsoever. Only "Life on Your Own" which has a nice video, Phil wandering through a deserted London, and "Electric Dreams", the joint venture with Giorgio Moroder, capture the spark that was The League, from the days when I use to see the logo all over everything.

R.I.P. The Human League - Thanks for all the Hard Times!!

If there is one unrelenting source of Garbage, it's songs made by people who have become famous for their work in other areas. Soap-stars, football players, everyone seems to think they can make a record. 99% of these are totally without redeeming merit, but the odd one is decadent enough to make it into the realms of Trash.

Anybody heard Emma Ridley's version of "School's Out"? It is probably the worst record, in terms of singing ability, I have ever heard - however, in the video, Miss Ridley gets back to doing what she does best, taking her clothes off. The result is a stunningly wonderful piece of Trash. I think she is now 16, which I suppose makes it legal, if not especially decent...

If you haven't seen the video, you have my sympathy. I don't think it will be shown again, even if it gets to No.1 - let's face it, TotP aren't going to show a sixteen year old putting it about in her underwear if they won't even let you mention the word "Ac*d". Shame!!

Here are a few films I've seen recently and enjoyed - not all are new releases, or are even fresh on video - I've not seen them before.

'Legend' (Ridley Scott) - If you've seen "Blade Runner", you'll know Ridley Scott is a genius at using light and shade. This film is another excellent example of the same, even if it does sometimes look like an ad. Tom Cruise is VERY un-"Top Gun".

'Day of the Dead' (George Romero) - I went out for a few games of Zaxxon after the cast spent more time bitching at each other than fighting the zombies. When Tom Savini gets his FX going, the film gets better. One character screaming "Choke on 'em!" at the zombies as he is torn apart is the stuff of nightmares.

'The Hidden' (Jack Sholder) - Shock Around the Clock', and enjoyed it so much I bought it again on national release. A fast paced gem of a movie, full of loud music, car chases and a performance from Kyle MacLachlan.

'Reform School Girls' (Tom de Simone) - Well over the top story of life in a borstal whose inhabitants include a geriatric O. Williams, and where the prison uniform is a wide range of exotic lingerie. Trashiest film I've seen in years, bit brutal here & there but brilliant overall.

LAIBACH
+ SUPPORT
at the Kentish Town, London NW5
Town & Country Club
Monday 12th December 1988
9-11 Highgate Road, Kentish Town, London NW5
Doors 7.30pm - tickets £6 advance

Metropolis Music Presents
Transvision Vamp
TICKETS £5.50 in advance
Monday 12th December 1988
7.30pm
9-11 Highgate Road, Kentish Town, London NW5
Doors 7.30pm - tickets £6 advance

CONTROVERSY CORNER

Too many people nowadays have their opinions for no good reasons, but only because "everybody" knows it is true. We find it immensely annoying that people are not prepared to think for themselves - received wisdom may be right or may be wrong, but to refuse to challenge it, or accept that it may be challenged, is the sign of mental stagnation. This part of "Trash City" is designed to provoke a response, by attacking widely held attitudes, and hopefully forcing you to consider YOUR viewpoint. This is open season time; any subject, trash or non-trash may be hit, and we're looking forward to receiving either your replies or your own rants.]

THE DEATH OF DEMOCRACY

People normally talk about democracy as if it were something sacred, and to be preserved at all costs. However, it is my belief that democracy is a fallacy which occupies a far-too important place in today's society.

Let me first elaborate exactly what I mean by democracy. I do not mean free speech, a free press or any of the other frilly bits round the edges - I mean the strange ritual every five years or so when most of the adult population go in to a curtained booth and put an X on a piece of paper in order to choose the next government.

Democracy is based on the principle that everyone should have a say in deciding how the country should be run. This is a fairly ridiculous idea, especially when you extend it to other fields. Everyone should have a shot at carrying out a heart transplant. Everyone deserves a chance to play for Arsenal (exception : everyone deserves a chance to play for Spurs - given their current form, they'd probably improve). Everyone ought to try their hand at flying the space shuttle. Silly, because you need skill and a lot of experience in these areas, so why should it be any different when it come to the vital task of choosing a government. which is an even more important task?

Personally, it seems to me to be a far better idea to take things like the choice of economic policy out of the hands of the people, 99% of whom (including myself) do not know the difference between monetarism and terrorism, and leave them up to those who understand the ramifications of their actions. I don't doubt that a party that promised to abolish taxes would be pretty popular, but they'd wreck the economy if elected.

Of course, democracy has its place. When people views are of roughly equal value, either because they have the same skill and experience or where the matter in question is one where these factors are unimportant (such as moral issues), then democracy is probably the best way, but to believe that this is so for all issues is to be oblivious to the obvious.

My ideal system of government would be one where the various areas would be 'ruled' by houses of people with appropriate qualifications. For example, matters involving the economy would perhaps be discussed by a sample chosen at random of people with economy degrees.

An excellent example can be seen in the legal system in this country. The idea of being tried by 'twelve men good and true' is a good one in theory, but selecting people at random from the electoral roll is not going to get you twelve good people very often, especially in sensitive cases where sexism, racism or political viewpoint can make a difference. If I was innocent, I'd rather be tried by a jury of 12 barristers or lawyers, who'd be far better able to see through the flim-flam put up

by the prosecution than the random collection of lager louts, Sloane Rangers and other people with no legal knowledge provided by our 'democratic' system. This is not to mention the many areas, such as fraud, where a detailed knowledge of the subject would be a distinct benefit for the jurors.

Overall, the sooner we get rid of the idea that democracy is the be-all and end-all of political systems, the better it'll be for this country. It has its place, but there are also times where it'd be a far better idea to forget about it, and admit that there are times when it is best to leave things up to the experts.

[Time for something a little lighter, I think. How about]

10 MOMENTS FROM FILM HISTORY GUARANTEED TO MAKE ME SQUIRM OR JUMP

It tends not to be just the over-the-top, gross special effects that make it onto this list - under-stated horror or the small set-pieces can be just as effective. So here's a list of all-time classics, that have the same effect on me no matter how often I see them.

- 1) Jaws - The moment when they're exploring the sunken boat and the severed head pops out of the port-hole.
- 2) Alien - Yes, THAT scene! John Hurt, the name actor, and a good bet to survive to the end of the film collapses at the table. Then his chest explodes. A masterpiece of shock.
- 3) Cat People - The zoo-keeper getting his arm ripped off by a panther in an almost entirely unexpected and horribly realistic manner.
- 4) Hellraiser - A couple hear a noise in the attic and go to investigate - when they get there they hear rats squeaking and assume this is what is responsible. But the camera pans round to reveal the rats, nailed to the wall...
- 5) The Gruesome Twosome - A girl is cut in two, but a long, lingering shot converts her assailant playing with her intestines from a brief moment of unpleasantness into a real squirmer.
- 6) The Thing - In this film, probably unbeaten for pure Shock Quantity, my 'favourite' bit is where they are carrying out blood tests using a hot wire, and the blood of a victim leaps out of the dish and scuttles about the floor.
- 7) The Fly - Brundle-fly's ear coming away in his hand and also when he squeezes his finger-nails off in this masterpiece of visceral horror.
- 8) Re-Animator - Strangely, the scene that gets me is the brain operation performed by the lecturer. Everything else I can handle, but this? Ugghh!
- 9) Lethal Weapon - Mel Gibson being tortured by the guy wielding the electric prods. Shudder.
- 10) Tom and Jerry in "The Flying Cat" - Tom has succeeded in flying with the aid of a corset, but he falls out of it, and lands on top of a tree with one leg either side. To the accompaniment of a buzz-saw noise, the tree is split from top to bottom. I wince every time I see this - it looks a lot worse than it sounds!

These are just the first ten that come to mind, I'm sure that I could come up with a few more if I thought about it. This list is being written just before I pop off home to watch the 'Evil Dead' and I'm sure that there are bits in it worthy of inclusion, but as I can't remember the exact details, I've omitted it from the list.

TRASH LITERATURE
(and literature about trash)

"Pranks - Re-Search #11" - The Re-Search Group. Re-Search Publs. 11.95
My first introduction to this group was their previous work on "Incredibly Strange Films" (still available), a real work of genius that was one of the main factors responsible for getting me interested in the work of the marginal film directors and also provided the title for Jonathan Woss's series (and the article after this one, too!). Understandably, I was quite looking forward to this book, and although it doesn't quite come up to the standard of their last work, there are enough gold nuggets to make it a worthwhile read.

The contributors all agree that there is more to the art of pranking than just playing tricks. The more malicious jokes, or those that only confirm the existing way of things are pointless - it takes no guts to execute a prank on a sub-ordinate, who has no means of hitting back. The best ones are those with a definite purpose, such as exposing bureaucracy or showing that you haven't been ground down by society.

However, beyond this, the pranksters split into a wide variety of groups, ranging from Timothy Leary's LSD japes through to performance artists who specialise in physically abusing themselves and/or the audience. This broad spectrum means that the articles vary enormously in content and style, and therefore in how interesting they are; while some pontificate endlessly on the nature of pranks, others are less ethereal and give practical examples. I found the latter much more enjoyable - pranks are a down to earth thing and the lack of seriousness with which they viewed life mirrors my view.

Overall, worth borrowing, if not buying.

"Relics" - Shaun Hutson. Star, 2.95

Never read any of his books before, but picked this one up in the newsagents on Farnborough Station, with a sticker on the front saying it was 'signed by the author'. It was something of a pleasant surprise - I expected an endless catalogue of atrocities, but although there is plenty of blood, guts, gore and people getting their eyes gouged out, the linking passages are written better than I expected, and the plot, while not totally original, comfortably holds the interest, with the climax being especially breath-taking.

Basically, it's a 'monster on the rampage' story. An archaeological dig on a building site finds a network of tunnels (by the simple method of falling into them, one of the members being impaled on a spike in a VERY nasty scene), filled with human remains. People start dying, with their intestines arranged beside them to form letters and their eyes removed. After a lot of this, someone works out what the tunnels are for but to say any more would spoil the story.

It has to be said that after a few gratuitous set-pieces, they do seem to become more or less the same - there's only so many ways you can describe some one being disembowelled. However, it was still an entertaining read, not quite up to the masters of the genre, Herbert and Barker, who are still a long way ahead in most departments, but enjoyable enough.

"Hollywood Lolitas" - Marianne Sinclair. Plexus, 7.95

I'd like to start by stressing that I bought this because it has got a large bit about Nastassja Kinski in it. Any statements to the contrary will be referred to my lawyer (when she gets home from school).

The subject of this book is the history of the nymphette in the cinema, from the earliest days of the silent movies, through Elizabeth Taylor (funny, I could never really think of her as being less than about 50 myself) up to the modern era of Jodie Foster and Brooke Shields. My first thought is that it was a little odd that it was written by a woman - I wouldn't have thought that the subject matter would have been interesting to a female. Her attitude throughout is not consistent; at times, she almost seems to condone fascination with young girls, while at other times she condemns it strongly, the overall impression being that "it's alright to look, but not to touch" - fair enough, really.

It does not stick strictly to the title either. While most of it certainly is 'Hollywood' based, the section of Nastassja Kinski is heavily based on her, er, 'relationship' with Roman Polanski, which took place in Europe. He was not Flavour of the Month in Hollywood then (see elsewhere for some idea why!). As for 'Lolitas', those of you that have actually read the book by Nabokov, rather than just flicking through it looking for dirty bits, will know that at the start of the book she is 12, and by the end she is 17. So what the hell is Shirley Temple doing in this book? Surely not even the most depraved paedophile could find anything even remotely attractive about her - I want to vomit at the mere sight of her...

No matter. Keeping my own personal opinions out of this review, it is an interesting book for the most part. Plenty of photographs provide a well-written and documented history of this, previously neglected, area of the cinema. Now, where did I put those heart-shaped sunglasses?

Ten Comics Worthy of Your Attention

[This is purely a personal choice by Jim McLennan - I suspect Steve and Per will wish to deny all connection with this list!]

1. Laser Eraser & Axel Pressbutton - A pair of assassins in a VERY odd future. Laden with lots of very black, i.e. sick, humour.
2. California Girls - Sorry about this one. Sickly sweet, aimed at people a lot younger than me, but it's just so nice! Complete with paper dolls.
3. Mai the Psychic Girl - Japanese 'manga' comic. Gorgeous artwork, a lot less 'wordy' than American comics. Speciality: four-page plane crashes.
4. Hellblazer - Occult comic with religious overtones. Powerful stuff, well drawn and leaving a nasty taste in the mouth.
5. Evangeline - Unusual comic in that religious people are the 'goodies'. It's about a nun - a very **dangerous** nun...
6. Angel Love - Another sweet one, but this one tackles abortion, drug abuse, politics, etc. Didn't last very long, more's the pity.
7. Slash Maraud - One man fighting an alien invasion of earth. So many great, novel ideas in it; would love to see this one made into a film.
8. Judge Anderson - Spin-off from the 'Judge Dredd' series, gratuitous violence, but a more sympathetic and human hero(ine) than the big D.
9. Natacha l'Hotesse de l'Air - French comic strip about an air-hostess. No, it's not at all naughty, though there was this parody of it that was well O.T.T. How to learn French with no tears.
10. Normalman - A parody of/homage to a different comic style in every issue, ranging from Disney to EC's horror comics, but you don't need much knowledge of comics to appreciate the delightful humour.

And a few I think are only worthy as fire-lighters : Elfquest, ALL the Marvel comics I've seen, 'funny animal' books and all benefit comics!

THE INCREDIBLY BAD FILM SHOW

Perhaps the word 'bad' should have been in inverted commas, because none of the films that'll be discussed in this spot are films we dislike, or would not enjoy watching. Instead, this is about films that will never win an Oscar, because they have one purpose - to entertain, generally in a trashy manner. Of course, most critics can not tolerate this and so the films are labelled 'bad', perhaps justifiably in some cases, but we would still rather watch them than any of Richard Attenborough's films... So, to start with, here's one from the early days of one of our favourite actresses - if you've read this far, you'll know who we mean!!

PASSION FLOWER HOTEL

The tone of this film is set in the very first shot, which is a close-up of a breast. Yes, this film is 100% sexploitation, right from the off, and doesn't really let up, through a continuous series of shower scenes, shots of school-girls in their nighties and sundry other gratuitous pieces of nudity until the end, when we finally get our reward for sitting through it all in the extremely droolworthy form of an unclothed, 16 year old, Nastassja Kinski.

In the first scene, we have the inhabitants of a dorm in St Clars's school for girls attempting to find out what heavy petting is like by the odd method of making their arms go numb and then touching themselves... Of course, such anti-social behaviour can not go unpunished, and the leader is moved to another dorm, leaving the remaining four to worry about the problems of being "four blossoming virgins who can't get rid of it".

Help is at hand though, in the shape of Deborah Collins (NK), a new American girl. She is first seen on the train to the school where she meets Frederick Irwin Benjamin Sinclair Reynolds (knows as FIBS, for obvious reasons), who is going to be a pupil at the boys' school, handily located just across the lake. This blossoming relationship is rudely ended when they are separated by their respective head teachers, both of whom look like ex-Gestapo agents.

Never daunted, Deborah phones his school and arranges to meet him that night, but he is caught, leaving her to sit around feeling melancholy, in a touching scene. At least it is touching, until a sea-gull craps on her, in one of the most surreal moments in cinema history.

Deborah, being an American girl, is treated as the fountain of all wisdom by her dorm-mates - she knows about rock & roll, successfully convincing the head girl that it is the latest exercise scheme, as used by the U.S. Olympic team (this movie seems to be set in the mid-50's, but it isn't easy to tell)! Equally, it is assumed that she knows all about s*x, and her friends ask her advice on how they too can lose their purity.

She comes up with the novel idea of forming a company, Club Love Unlimited to offer sex to FIBS and his mates (with a small m, pun not intended), with the school-girls acting as the hookers. They draw up a price list - "1: Just looking; above the waist, 5 Francs, below the waist, 7 Francs, both, 10 Francs. Time limit 15 minutes. 2: Touching; above the waist, 8 Francs, below the waist, 10 Francs, both, 15 Francs. Time limit 15 minutes. 3: All the way ; 20 Francs. No time limit" and send a letter to their prospective clients, who understandably are enthusiastic about the idea.

The first customer is dispatched, chosen in the time-honoured method by an eating contest (grasshoppers, to be precise). It is the 'fat boy', Plum

Pudding, disliked by his fellows - they reduce his appeal somewhat by dropping a dead fish in his blazer pocket. The location of the meeting is a boat in the middle of the lake (before launching, there is a gorgeous parody of the life-jacket demonstration in planes). The obvious occurs (this film is never subtle!) and the boat capsizes, nearly drowning Plum Pudding.

Another attempt is made. Another eating contest (dumplings) - complete with dramatic piano music, but this time Plum Pudding is beaten. Following the previous fiasco, the location is terra firma, the boathouse, decked out with cushions & curtains, and renamed "The Passion Flower Hotel". This is no more successful though, as a series of accidents ("It's my fault, I'm left handed") and the after-effects of the dumplings take their toll...

To restore their reputation, FIBS sends in a sub - their head boy, wise in the ways of the world. Unfortunately, the girls' art teacher (male) and his girl-friend have also arranged a rendezvous there. Things are not helped by the Club Love Unlimited employee OD-ing on Dutch courage - she ends up being carried unconscious back to the school by the art master, while the substitute gets off with the girl-friend.

St Clara's head teacher is aware that something is going on, and moves the head girl into the dorm. They convince her one of the boys is passionately in love with her, and she rushes down to the boat-house to meet him. No luck here either - she ends up leaping into the lake for some reason or other that managed to get lost in the dubbing.

This disheartens the directors of Club Love Unlimited so much that they decide to close down, but decide to go out with a bang and arrange a strip-tease contest with the boys as judges. This is arranged for the annual prize-giving at St Clara's, and the teachers are removed from circulation by putting "disinhibiting pills" in the punch (as in "Carry On Abroad").

From here on, things get chaotic, but the end result is that everyone gets SOMEONE, even Plum Pudding, who falls for St Clara's head girl. Deborah and FIBS are, of course entwined, in a soft-focus sex scene, accompanied by some particularly sickly piano music.

The next morning comes the reckoning. Deborah is expelled, but saves her friends from the same fate by threatening to tell the newspapers, and the film ends with her leaving on the train, swearing her love for FIBS.

There you have the plot, possibly one of the most ridiculous ever? It is just SO tacky - there is no way a comedy about school-girl prostitutes could be made now, with the current problems of AIDS and child abuse. In it's 80 or so minutes, it manages to trample on almost all of society's corns but does it in such a manner that you have got to laugh.

The director, Andre Farwagi, knows he has few cards to play, basically nudity and more nudity, but he does so with some skill - you are always kept hanging on, hoping for some more flesh. The humour is pretty basic, relying almost totally on slap-stick, but I still find it a highly amusing and entertaining film. It does get shown on television now and again - Thames showed it about nine months ago, and TVS a little while after - so I'd suggest that you keep an eye out for it. If you have an interest in 'bad' movies or even if you just want to enjoy some gratuitous sex (which is getting harder to find these days as censorship clamps down), this is one film I'd certainly recommend.

BEATS

REALITY,

How to tell if YOU are descended from a space alien

WW2 bomber found on moon — has vanished

Woman with two heads files a job discrimination lawsuit

Cemetery shocker!

DOESN'T

IT?

Ghouls break into tomb

Mars probe photographs 200-foot space monster — and it's headed toward Earth!



Jet pilots shatter time barrier and fly back in history

His doctor dad keeps him supplied with his bizarre delicacy — human tonsils!

Nuclear sub attacked by 120-foot-long shark!

Doc turned my breasts to concrete

The wacko candidate wants a return to basics — head-hunting and cannibalism!

IT MUST BE TRUE...

Recently, people have begun to realise that not all papers are as much guardians of the truth as we'd like to believe. Certain papers will print anything they care to make up, if they think they can get away with it - fortunately, they sometimes get it very wrong as several libel cases have shown. However, not all newspapers believe that it is necessary to print hurtful lies about people to produce an entertaining and successful publication - one example of this is "The Weekly World News".

It's an American paper - in tone, it is similar to the Sunday Sport, but it doesn't have the naked women on every second page that it's British cousin does. The two papers do share a close relationship - many of the stories printed in the Sport first appeared in the Weekly World News i.e. "World War 2 Bomber Found on Moon!" & "World War 2 Bomber Found on Moon Vanishes!". It's actually an off-shoot of "The National Enquirer", but while that paper concentrates on 'celebrity' stories, the WWN has no bounds set to it.

I like the WWN. It strikes me that it is much less harmful than certain papers I could mention for three reasons :

- i) It makes things up consistently - the gutter press leaven their poison with just enough truth to make it plausible.
- ii) Its fabrications are entirely harmless - no-one is ever hurt by them, and the odds of an alien from Mars suing for damages are pretty minimal, I'd have thought!
- iii) The 'journalists' (and I use the term loosely) on the WWN have far better imaginations than most. Instead of being obsessed with X having an affair with Y, their stories are a wider range of fiction than is found in most local libraries.

Somewhere near here you'll see a few example stories from recent issues of the WWN. I feel a few of them require a little more explanation... :

WORLD WAR II BOMBER FOUND ON MOON HAS VANISHED - "An American warplane that was found on the moon last spring has vanished, thwarting a multi-national probe that was to determine how it got there in the first place. The moon-bound World War 2 bomber first made headlines when a Soviet probe photographed it at the bottom of a crater in late March. Dr Wilhelm Greder of the Swiss UFO group CONTACT said it is almost certain that space aliens are somehow connected with the plane. "It would have taken a space-ship of enormous size and sophistication to move it. We're just about 99% sure that is what happened. It's almost as if someone or something was aware of our investigation and took the plane before we found out too much".

HIS DOCTOR DAD... 'Rick Gibson eats tonsils like they're going out of style: on crackers, with cheese or straight. He just opens wide and scarfs [I assume this is some obscure Americanism for eating! Ed.] them down! "They're not much to look at but they sure are tasty" said the 36-year old man from London, "They go great with anything'. Turns out his father is a doctor and can keep him supplied with these delicacies. As for the taste, the very best ones taste like hard oysters, the worst ones like pencil erasers...

WOMAN WITH TWO HEADS... "A female communications student is suing her local TV station, claiming officials there discriminated against her when they denied her a job - just because she had two heads". The job she was going for was as an anchorwoman on a news programme! One of the quotes of the year has to be "I was twice as intelligent as any other candidate they considered, and although I have two heads, both of them are pretty". The

case has touched off a major debate in Bulgaria, where it happened - station chief Kiril Mihailov's comment ; "We are not in the business of providing jobs for freaks".

HOW TO TELL IF YOU ARE DESCENDED FROM A SPACE ALIEN.

- * Eye color green or blue, and set wide apart in the head
- * Feet smaller than normal with longer toes
- * Ears large and close to the head (is Prince Charles half-alien?)
- * Hand and fingers long and slender. Nails perfectly formed but weak
- * Face delicate, but sharply chiselled. Lips full or very thin
- * Hips fuller than average or downright wide.
- * Hair red or blonde
- * Body build small to average. Bones are usually weak and thin.
- * Personality - smart, perceptive & intelligent, but likely to be a dreamer.

Beep, beep. However their biggest scoop deserves to be reported in full...

Are ETs trying to kidnap the royal infant?

Fergie's baby has close encounter with UFO!

By RAGAN DUNN

Fergie's baby had a close encounter with a UFO when she was 13 days old — but here's the clincher:

The infant Beatrice spelled out the words "BRIGHT LIGHTS" with alphabet blocks to describe her experience!

"The Princess' mystical birthdate — 8/8/88 — led us to believe she would be gifted but we never expected anything like this," a palace insider told reporters.

"Most babies her age are barely able to bat at blocks, much less arrange them into words that have meaning."

The British press was stunned by the revelation and it was front-page news across the nation.

"Prince Andrew and Fergie were terrified," the palace insider added. "They're afraid that extraterrestrials are trying to contact little Beatrice, and possibly even take her away from them."

UFO researcher Peter Gordon fueled the royal parents' fears when he confirmed that a glowing, saucer-shaped UFO was spotted as it flew by the Princess' nursery at Balmoral Castle.

"The vessel was said to be reddish orange and moving at tremendous speeds," said the expert.

"My sources say it was directly over the castle just af-

ter Fergie arrived from London with her baby.

"I believe extraterrestrials wanted to contact the Princess knowing that her birthday would bless her with unusual powers.

"These are highly intelligent beings," Gordon continued. "It's only natural that they would try to contact one

of their own kind. And besides, a royal friend on Earth would be the perfect introduction for future meetings between us and them."

Dr. Peter Brebart, the Belgian UFO researcher, agreed that space aliens might be interested in contacting Andrew and Fergie's baby.

He said thousands of chil-

dren were born Aug. 8, 1988, just like the Princess — and UFOs have already been reported over the homes of at least a dozen of them.

The Duke and Duchess of York angrily refused to discuss their daughter's UFO encounter with reporters. But the palace source confirms that they are watching the

FERGIE shows off Britain's newest Princess shortly after the baby's birth on August 8.

child closely for more signs of super intelligence or psychic ability.

Dr. Brebart said: "I don't blame them for worrying about their daughter. Thousands of people are abducted by UFOs each year.

"If extraterrestrials are interested in this child, the danger is all too real."



I have mixed feelings about censorship. Sometimes, I think it's all a Bad Thing, while at other times it seems that if the right things were censored, the country would be a better place. This article is an attempt to sort out, some of the issues - although it concentrates on films and TV, much of it is relevant to other areas too.

C*NS*RS*P

If we are strictly accurate, there is no film censorship in Britain today. This may surprise you, especially if you have heard of the big problems encountered by films like "Texas Chainsaw Massacre 2" (a rumoured TWENTY minutes of cuts required by the British Board of Film Classification (BBFC)), but there is no obligation upon a film company to submit it's product for certification. Virtually all do so though, and will make the cuts necessary to ensure the film gets the 'right' classification.

When it comes to cinema showings the BBFC is purely an advisory body. They classify films, or can refuse a certificate altogether, but the final decision on whether a film can be seen or not rests with the local council who can overrule the BBFC, if they see fit, as has happened recently in some areas of the country with "The Last Temptation of Christ". However, they will normally agree with the BBFC and will not permit uncertificated films to be shown.

There are some important exceptions to these rules. One is the private cinema club, which can show films that have not been passed by the BBFC to it's members (presumably they have to be over 18). The legal technicalities of why they should be exempt are a mystery to me - my entire judicial experience is two years sharing a flat with a student lawyer - but I'm quite willing to accept the benefits!

The opposite is true when it comes to videos. Here, the BBFC are not just advisory, but are the regulatory body - it is an offence, punishable by quite severe fines or even a jail sentence, to sell or hire videos that have not received a certificate. This came in via the Video Recordings Act of 1983 and was responsible for the disappearance of "Cannibal Ferox", "I Spit On Your Grave" and a huge number of totally unmemorable porno films from the shelves of your local friendly video shop.

The BBFC do not apply the same standards to cinema films as it does to video releases, which causes endless anguish to fans who eagerly rent or buy a copy of their favourite film only to find that half the bits they remembered with great fondness have been removed to get the film passed. Even more is likely to be lost if the film is shown on television (with the remarkable exception of "The Thing", which made it onto ITV with it's effects intact, only missing the odd swear-word here and there) - more on this later.

The most glaring point of contradiction is that it is only films that have to go through the certification process. There is no similar system for books (can you imagine the furore if a scheme was set up through which a government organisation would monitor all written works?) - there is nothing to stop anyone from publishing a book containing stills cut from films, although the obscenity laws could be invoked (but when was the last time you heard of a book being seized because of it's violent, rather than sexual, nature?).

Another problem is that the censors rely heavily on images rather than attitudes. To their credit, the situation here is not as bad as in some places where the system is almost a 'scorecard' one, with so many points

for a decapitation, so many for a "shit", with the total giving the certificate, or the cuts required for a certificate. Here, the reputation of the director is taken into account, which is why films like "The Fly" and "Hellraiser" were passed uncut (for cinema release), but neither Cronenberg nor Barker are immune, with "Videodrome" being hit especially heavily on video, and Clive Barker not being overly optimistic about the chances of "Hellbound" [see review]. Even if the scenes are not at all gratuitous and the attitude is admirable, the image is the thing.

Counter examples are possible. A graphic portrayal of someone being sliced up by telegraph wires into five or six sections would not normally be allowed, but when it's in a Tom & Jerry cartoon, no-one seriously wants a ban.

One problem with censoring by attitude is that it is rather more difficult to censor a film's attitude than if it is images that are considered undesirable - you can't change the feeling of a film by trimming a few scenes. This means you have to ban films entirely, and you are then onto pretty dangerous ground in a democracy.

I don't think that any image is capable of causing an anti-social act in any sane individual, and that even in a madman, it is just as likely to be a 'normal' image that tips the balance as any sex or violence. Case in point; remember John Hinckley Jr, the guy who tried to assassinate Pres. Reagan a few years back? Who did he claim as his 'justification'? Jodie Foster - to my knowledge SHE hasn't appeared in any video nasties.

However, there can be no doubt that images can affect people, as is clearly shown by what happened when news reports of the Ethiopian disaster led to a massive wave of public concern and charity. Almost all adults are capable of telling fact from fiction, but I still feel that even totally fictitious scenes, whether on TV, in the cinema or in a book, can still alter your viewpoint, though to a much lesser degree naturally.

To the vast majority of people, this is no problem. They have a wide enough variety of 'input' that the overall effects tend to balance out - any 'anti-social' effects of watching "Rape is Nice", are cancelled by everyday input from TV, newspapers, etc telling you 'Rape is NOT Nice'. This attitude, by the way, also negates the argument which asks why it is alright for the censors to see a film, but not alright for us. The danger does not lie in watching a broad range of films, but if you watch nothing but hard-core sadistic sex, it's bound to alter your viewpoint.

So what should be censored? The two main areas deserving of consideration are violence and sex. We'll take these in order and start with violence. There are several points which I'd like to see considered :

- i) Is the violence by people on people? This is the 'fantasy' aspect, of cartoons and many horror films - people will find it very difficult to imitate a film like 'Re-Animator'!
- ii) How are the people committing the acts shown? If the heroes are seen to be violent, it is more likely to make people think that violence is in some way acceptable than if violent people are depicted as 'bad'. The 'Nightmare on Elm Street' films seem to me to be on dodgy ground here, even if Freddy is an anti-hero, people identify with him more than his victims.
- iii) The reality of the violence, and the attitude with which it is shown. If we showed the REAL effects of a shotgun wound, I think it would have a BENEFICIAL effect; most people would take it a lot more seriously. At the other extreme, when violence is clearly not real, when it descends into slapstick, I doubt if anyone's attitude

will change. If violence is depicted 'casually', like any other everyday occurrence, people will start accepting it, instead of it being a shocking event.

Only when all three guidelines are violated show a film be considered to be possibly worth banning - Laurel and Hardy fail i) & ii), but are clearly such pure slapstick that they easily pass iii). Some more examples prove extremely interesting. 'Rambo' fails the lot, while virtually all horror films pass at least the third section - part of their horrific nature is to show unpleasant things such as the result of violence - and many are also detached enough from reality to let them through the first as well. This seems about right to me, as I personally find it very disturbing that films which seem to me to 'glory in slaughter' and advocate thoughtless violence as a solution to all problems, are passed with no cuts and a 15 certificate, while horror films, even those clearly based in fantasy, and where the violence is depicted REALISTICALLY, are continually sliced 'n' diced by the men with the scissors.

Sex is, if anything, an even more touchy area - the range of opinions on the subject is enormous. Some countries are very touchy about sex, for example the United States, while others are very liberal - France shows hard-core pornography on TV. I tend to the conservative (small c!) point of view, not least because 95% of sex scenes are totally gratuitous, but a lot of people confuse sex and nudity - we should remember there IS a difference! However, I can't get all worked up about it, probably because I find most sex films pretty dull!

TV and cinema have different standards of what can be shown, which can provoke the occasional howl of outrage when the censoring is less than subtle, but from a moral, rather than artistic, point of view I can see why it's necessary. Cinema is both an active and controlled entertainment, in that it takes an effort to go to your local Odeon (it's difficult to accidentally see a film), and the owners can prevent children from seeing films meant for adults. This removes the risk of being accidentally 'offended' by something that exists with TV (although I haven't yet seen anything I found offensive - perhaps I'm watching the wrong programs?) and also corrupting the young and innocent.

The situation is considerably more delicate when we consider television made FOR children, where the viewers are more easily influenced and are seeking role-models. If you watch TV on a Saturday morning, and see 'He-Man, Master of the Universe' or his sister 'She-Ra, Princess of Power', you'll see casual violence by the hero/ines on a scale that far surpasses most programmes for adults (with the possible exception of professional wrestling). Although these programmes are clearly not a representation of suburban life in the 1980's (unless you live in a very different suburb from me!), children are less capable of telling the difference between fact and fiction. Although there are many worthwhile and perfectly harmless programs on TV I don't like to ponder what might happen when the children weaned on He-man grow up...

I fear this piece has raised more questions than it has answered. I've neatly avoided important issues like the morality of censorship in a democracy, but hopefully this piece will stimulate some of you out there to think about this important topic, before it's too late...

CLASSIC SPLATTER

When the subject of horror movies comes up, certain films are sure to be mentioned with a sort of reverential awe. They range from the 'artistic' to straight out-and-out exploitation, but their common link is that they have gained a reputation for being, in one way or another, 'classic splatter'. However, how many of these films are actually worthy of the title? Are they still capable of horrifying an audience today? Why did they become classics? That's what this section is going to be about - we have no doubt some people will disagree with much of what is said as we merrily slaughter a few sacred cows and look forward to hearing your opinions and alternative viewpoints.

The Texas Chainsaw Massacre - Tobe Hooper (1974)

EVERYONE has heard of this film - even those without any interest at all in gore know the name. I suspect that if 'Family Fortunes' asked the question "Name a film with buckets of blood", this would be well up the list of most people.

But you'd be wrong.

It is almost totally bloodless. Almost all the violence happens out of shot. True, someone gets hung from a meat-hook. No blood. Someone else is carved up with a chain-saw. No blood. It all happens out of shot. For some reason, it has achieved this reputation of being splattersplattersplatter while barely spilling a drop.

This doesn't mean it isn't a good film. However, it also manages to break the one main rule of horror - YOU MUST SYMPATHISE WITH THE VICTIMS. Now, I don't know what it was like when it came out, but at the screening I saw it at, the audience cheered wildly every time one of the teenagers was murdered - every time Leatherface appeared, there was a round of applause. And I can see why. Sitting here in 1988, I find the victims an entirely unpleasant, unworthy group of leftover hippies who wear such absolutely ridiculous clothes, including the widest flares I think it has ever been my misfortune to see, that they DESERVE to die.

That's the bad news out of the way. The good news is that there are some extremely impressive touches. In the house, a fully grown hen is crammed into a canary's cage. The chase sequences are excellently managed, despite the ludicrous images of Gunnar Larsen not so much carrying the chainsaw as being led by it as if it was an Alsatian on a leash.

A landmark film, no doubt, in that it's influence has been felt down the years by almost every splatter movie director. Homages to it are still being paid now, 14 years later (notably in "Hollywood Chainsaw Hookers" [British title "Hollywood {PICTURE OF A CHAINSAW} Hookers"], which was a bit gorier, rather funnier and a lot sexier than the original).

Overall, this film should be thought of in much the same way as the Sex Pistols - quite outrageous for it's time, and deserving of a place in history, but looking back at it now, with the benefit of hindsight, you can't help wondering what all the fuss was about...

Driller Killer - Abel Ferrara, (1980).

Now we're getting into the SERIOUS video nasties, with this one which is on the DPP's magic list of 30 or so films worthy of prosecution, along with such other gems as "Blood Feast". However, once again, this one has to be classed a severe disappointment to the student of splatter, with

only one of the killings taking place in anything like the detailed close-up suggested by it's reputation.

It is a tale of madness. An artist working in a studio is gradually driven mad by the pressures of work and the intolerable racket resulting from living next door to an extremely poor sub-punk rock group. His agent rejects his master-work, a painting of a buffalo, and he finally starts killing various vagabonds, tramps and winos with the aid of (surprise, surprise) a power drill. The reason WHY he does this is never crystal clear; one possibility is that he fears them, or rather fears BECOMING one of them. Who can say with insanity?

Is it 'liable to corrupt or deprave'? Frankly, no. Having sat all the way through it, I found it an immensely depressing film, with very little in the way of excitement. To some extent, it COULD be considered corrupting in that the murderer is the only person shown as anything else other than a bastard - we are encouraged to identify with him, certainly a lot more than the victims, who only appear for the sole purpose of being killed.

As video nasties go, this is probably the nearest I've seen to one that can be justified artistically. Taken as a film about the descent into madness, it is certainly a worthy film, being both convincing and fairly unpleasant simultaneously, but as a piece of splatter, or even a piece of entertainment, it is very sadly lacking in anything that would make me want to watch it again.

Nightmare Movies - Kim Newman, Bloomsbury Press, 12.95

Finally for this issue, not a splatter movie, but a book ABOUT splatter movies (though the range covered is a lot wider than just the pure gore film). Quick review this, as I've not had much time to look at this one properly, but it comes with an impeccable pedigree (supposedly Clive Barker's favourite book), and what I've seen of it so far seems to support this view.

It is a survey of the horror film, roughly from 'Night of the Living Dead' until the present day (he says the last film he saw before finishing the book was in May 1988). It's written from more or less a single viewpoint, which is both an advantage and a disadvantage - I disagree with about half of what he says in the book, but he does at least JUSTIFY his views, which is more than a lot of writers do.

There is a nice sense of the fan throughout - he clearly enjoys watching films, and this comes across well. A sense of humour is obvious, even in the little things like photo captions. If this book has a fault, it is perhaps in that it takes a little too snobbish a view, claiming that a film of pure effects is of virtually no merit - while this may be true in an artistic sense, it is certainly not true when it comes to entertainment (which is, after all, the main reason I go to the cinema).

There are many photographs liberally scattered throughout the book. These vary widely in quality and atmosphere, though they are unfortunately all in black and white (critics rail against colorisation of old b/w movies, but nobody seems too bothered when still pictures from a colour film appear in monochrome!).

Taken as a whole, I'm looking forward to reading it, even if I'm going to have to restrain myself every time he tells me how EXTREMELY good George Romero is!!

NIGHTMARES IN A DAMAGED BRAIN

Questions framed themselves in my mind.

Disorderly, sure, but a pattern began to emerge. Ok, so I wasn't bothered that the guy was reading some splatter fanzine. Guess it's pretty dull between Tottenham Court Road and Kentish Town on the Northern Line. I mean, Mornington Crescent is not exactly a cultural oasis in a sea of decrepitude. More kinda the other way around.

Oh yeh - anyway, some woman was giving this guy (the one with the gruesome black and white picture book) the kinda frown usually reserved for a kid at boarding school using the wrong spoon, or something. Not that I went to boarding school of course. But I could sympathise with some of the aims - you know; know yourself, accept yourself and then the mastery of self can begin. Jeez, are spoons really important? Then why did British Rail coffee come with a stirrer so short you generally got wet fingers?

Perhaps it was her attitude I disliked. Then again, gore movies had a tendency to the kinda society decent people like to think they uphold in rather a bad light. Saw this movie one time. Something to do with living dead and split dogs. Anyway, they eat the medics and the police who don't have the brains to stay away, so the military nuke the entire area. Not that I'm implying anything about standards of taste over the fish-pond, just that America is the only country in the wrld that could make (good) films about it's own headlong plunge into the Cro-Magnon era. Various parts of the New York underground are already inhabited by tribes of kids who never really grasped the Robin Hood concept, and who paint their cave dwelling with Chrysler and Ford touch-up colours. George Clemenceau was right about the Ewe Ess of Ay. He said it was the only nation in history to pass from Development to Degeneration without passing through Civilisation. Smart guy.

Anyway, I dried my fingers while I watched the cleavage of the woman behind me in admiration, or to be precise, in the window. Well, they had given us the horror movie, but I was hard pressed to think of anything else that didn't make you fat. Nastassja Kinski wasn't American, but maybe that proved my point.

It was then that I noticed the girl with the reflection was holding one of those CD sized plastic bags. The ones you feel such a dick carrying. I figured it probably contained one of those horribly commercial love-song compilations from the dreamy look in her eyes. You know the type - a passing extra-terrestrial would be forgiven for believing that sex and love are merely consumer durables, as clean, polished and translucent as a smoked glass coffee-table, and ultimately as useful. But that was the ad-man's dream, the notion that love and sex note only are, but ought to be, contactless, bodyless. By inference, sex is dirty in a CD world. Hell, heavy metal guitars don't burn your ears and fry your brains any more.

I figured a good quantity of cherry yoghurt would help her sort it out. But I figured wrong, her boy-friend could obviously buy her things I couldn't spell. The guy learning anatomy had the right idea. I reckon he had discovered that Pop-Art was all trash anyway. Pop-Art, one of those doublespeak words like Fresh Frozen and Military Intelligence. He was seriously into self-exploration, or seriously sick.

But why did I care? I guessed if you scratch the surface, you might just find out what's underneath. The guy in the book was a mess, and I had a sneaking feeling that below the product and packaging of our conveyor

belt existence things were pretty much the same. I mean the woman with the attitude problem had probably got more hang-ups than a cloakroom.

I sorta read this 'graphic novel' (what?) recently. There was this Public Spirit character who shot anabolic steroids and tried to ice his wife for getting a touch pregnant while defending the American Dream, and I mean that both ways. But the funny part was the hero - a leather and barbed wire clad sadist upholding 'Justice'. Shit, it was good stuff. Exactly the kinda breakdown I was talking about. Some guy with a smile that would get most people locked up in a room with soft walls said that ecstasy is having the sweat licked from your armpits by a leather-clad dwarf on a Harley Davidson.

So was I crazy or was all hell gonna break loose sooner or later. I figure if you don't accept the shit you're told is 'good' for you, then can you accept anything? Rome fell into the pits of decay by people so far removed from reality they didn't see it happen. Here I am, 368 years almost to the day since Cromwell was publicly denounced for playing cricket, with a head full of crazy questions, like I said, and I can't even ask the guy with the 'zine where he bought it. It's not, well, done to talk to strangers.

Guess it's best I don't know, my world is fragile enough with all these contradictions already.

Well, 1988 is nearly at an end (it will be by the time you read this), and so it's the customary time to look back over the past year and pick out a few highlights and lowlights.

Top 10 films seen in '88 (no order) (eleven really!)

- The Hidden
- The Seventh Sign
- Reform School Girls
- A Fish Called Wanda
- Jean de Florette/Manon des Sources
- The Gruesome Twosome
- Brain Damage
- Nekromantik
- Prison Ship Star Slammer
- Robocop

Not all these were released in 88, but they all first brushed across my consciousness in the year past. I was torn about including a couple of the films I saw in an all-nighter on the 30th of December 1987, but in the end I decided to be strict with myself!

Top 10 Records released in 1988 (LP's or singles)

- Laibach - Let It Be
- Transvision Vamp - Sex Kick (Ciao Portobello)
- Eighth Wonder - I'm Not Scared
- Act - Laughter, Tears and Rage
- Age of Chance - Take It!
- Siouxsie and the Banshees - Peep Show
- Thomas Dolby - Aliens Ate my Buick
- Devo - Some Things Never Change
- Tiffany - I think We're Alone Now
- Laibach - Sympathy for the Devil (Who Killed the Kennedys?)

Not a good year musically. Too much garbage, not enough bad taste, with only the rise of the bimbo and the continuing steady improvement of the remarkable Laibach giving much hope for the future.

CONTRIBUTIONS

So there you have Issue 0. We hope to get round to producing Issue 1 in three months or so, but if before we do, we'd like to know what you thought about this one. If you enjoyed it, please let us know; it's a great boost to our egos (!!) and it'll be interesting to know what sort of people read our inane ramblings. If you didn't like it, write and let us know WHAT you didn't like and WHY not - ideas for the sort of things you'd enjoy are also especially welcome. You are warned NOW that any letters will be considered as possible material for publication, unless you say otherwise. Name & address will be withheld if desired, and added to the Blackmail File instead.

Better still, why not contribute? You've now seen the sort of topics that we'll be covering, but we'll consider anything (especially 3 days before the next issue's due out), as long as it's written with enthusiasm (a Biro is also acceptable). No money, just a brief moment of fame. It'd be nice if it was typed, but as long as it's legible, we're not bothered. It's up to YOU to make sure that what you say is legal, honest and truthful (the decent bit is your option) - we'll be fascinated to hear about Jeffrey Archer or Koo Stark's indiscretion, but only if you either have photos to prove it, or a Plutonium American Express card for the libel settlement.

Articles can be of any length, but generally the shorter they are, the better a chance they have of being published. Particularly welcome are neat little space-fillers to drop in at the end of things that aren't an exact number of pages long. Clippings, quotes, cartoons and so on - if you've ever been to the doctor's and read Reader's Digest you'll know the sort of thing but we're looking for something a little more, er, shall we say "alternative"... Lists of 'Top 10' films, books, sex objects, beers are always wanted. It'd be a help if you could let us know about a big article in advance so that we can plan ahead and hopefully avoid getting three on the same subject, but this isn't too vital - when it comes to reviews, we'd like a good few on the same thing so that we can get a range of opinions.

If your article can't be fitted into one issue, it might make it into a future one. Obviously, it'll have more chance if it's still relevant - a film review that is nice and topical now, will be a little less fresh in three months...

Artwork is also wanted, but please remember that we're rather restricted by what we can put through our copier! Black & white line drawings are probably O.K. - you'd be best to try photocopying them at home first. We can handle up to A3 size illustrations, by reducing them on the copier. We'll do our best to return all work, but can't accept any responsibility for loss, damage, etc however caused, etc, etc. Sending your stuff with an SAE will help stop it getting hidden underneath a Nastassja Kinski video because we can't remember who sent it in.

Even if you don't feel up to having anything published, write us a letter anyway. We can't promise to reply to them all, but they'll all be read and appreciated!

Look forward to hearing from you...

The Trash Patrol.

FUTURE SCHLOCK

Assuming we do eventually get round to producing another issue, what will be in it? Depends on the sort of feed-back we get, what sort of articles are sent in, etc, etc. However, some of the things that are planned to go in at some point in the future (which may or may not be in Issue 1) :

*Classic Splatter - The World Heavyweight Psychopathic Championship of the World : Jason 'Hockey Mask' Vorhees versus Freddy 'Floppy Hat' Krueger, as we take a look at 'Friday the 13th' and 'A Nightmare on Elm St' [sidelight : did you know that Elm Street was where Lee Harvey Oswald shot JFK from?]

*More Nastassja - Yes, we rambled on for far too long in this issue about her, so it's had to be split in two and the rest of it will appear in the next issue.

*Sleaze - A cinema up in London is showing La Ciccolina [apologies to any Italian readers for the spelling - French I can cope with, but not Italian!] in 'Clockwork Banana'. There may be a review of this, but it depends on whether we can pluck up the courage to go, and also if we can find my dirty mac.

*Letters - There will be some letters. If you don't write them, then we will just have to print letters from the council, final demands from BT, internal memos from the company we work for and so on and so forth *ad nauseum*. You have been warned.

*The Incredibly Bad Film Show - Quite possible THE most awful film of all time, "Return of the Barbarian Women".

*Well, there doesn't seem to have been a lot about Inter-rail holidays in this issue, so we suppose we'd better try and put something in the next one. How about 'Great Railway Stations of Europe'? Or perhaps you would prefer 'Why every train leaving Barcelona is packed'. Maybe we'll wimp out and give you a lightning run-down on red-light districts, but there are a few gaps in my knowledge. Germany, for example. Has the Reeperbahn really been taken over by transvestites, as we have heard? Let us know. Anonymity will be preserved...

THE GREAT TITLE COMPETITION

"Trash City" as a name for this 'zine has provoked much discussion, with about a 50/50 split between those who like it and those who can't stand it! So we're throwing the debate open to all - comments & alternative names would be much appreciated, now you've read it and know what it's all about. Here's a selection of ones we came up with :

Passion Flower Hotel	The Perfect Kiss	Escapist Quarterly
Blitzed By Beauty, Dead By Dawn	Cenobite Sandwich	Phobophilia
The Lolita Gazette	The Ultimate Force	Slice Me Slowly
City of Dreams		

Any of the above appeal? Sure you can come up with a few more...

Ok. That'll do for now. I've got a train to catch [though given that I nearly came in on the one involved in today's disaster, I don't think I should be pushing my luck]. See you in three months.

There you have it - issue 0 hasn't QUITE turned out the way I planned, but since I didn't have any idea what it would be like to start with, I can't really complain! There's been more about films in here than anticipated, though given I saw no less than SIXTEEN films at the cinema in the first week of December alone, it's not surprising.

Hope you had a good Xmas. I had two weeks or so of sleeping, eating and watching TV but wasn't too impressed with the festive T.V. - they claimed to be catering to 'a family audience', but seemed to me to be aiming more at the lowest common denominator; Russ Abbott, omnibus East Enders, etc. Mind you, it was always going to be a pretty tame Christmas after the BBC used up their entire gratuitous sex quota for the month in 'The Rainbow'!

Anyway, here's a memento of the nearest thing to trash sport I've seen...

MOSSET PARK
SCOTTISH CUP 2nd RD.
FORRES MECHANICS



ALLOA ATHLETIC
JANUARY 7th, 1989
KICK OFF 2.15pm
PROGRAMME 50p